

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8-13 are all the claims pending in the application.

The Examiner does not indicate that the drawings filed with the application on September 5, 2003 have been accepted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge such acceptance in the next PTO communication.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Fukuda (U.S. Patent No. 5,787,204). Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 of the present invention is characterized by filtering the data block according to the filtering information which is generated by checking whether all coefficients of pixels in a predetermined region of the data block are equal to zero. The Examiner's citation of col. 10, lines 54-67 does not disclose checking whether all coefficients of pixels in a predetermined region of the data block are equal to zero.

According to col. 11, lines 5-9 of Fukuda, the in-block coding amount calculation circuit (115) detects block boundaries in compressed code data and calculates the amount of coding contained between blocks. Further, the distortion removal characteristic determining circuit (116) determines filtering characteristics based on the amount of coding calculated by the in-block coding amount calculation circuit (115). Thus, Fukuda merely monitors the coefficient of the data block in order to calculate the amount of coding, and does not use the result of monitoring to generate filter information. In other words, "the filter characteristics" of col. 10, lines 65-66 of Fukuda, which the Examiner regards as the claimed "filtering information," is

determined by the amount of coding, and the amount of coding is calculated without considering whether all coefficients of pixels in a predetermined region of the data block are equal to zero.

Thus, Fukuda fails to teach each and every element of claim 1, and therefore fails to anticipate claim 1. Accordingly, we would respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Furthermore, claim 4 recites features similar to those of claim 1. Claim 4 is, therefore, also patentable at least for reasons analogous to those presented above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, we would respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-3, 5-6 and 8-13 stand objected to by the Examiner as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully hold in abeyance the rewriting of these claims, pending further prosecution of their parent claims.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

This Application is being filed via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS). Applicants herewith petition the Director of the USPTO to extend the time for reply to the above-identified Office Action for an appropriate length of time if necessary. Any fee due under 37 U.S.C. § 1.17(a) is being paid via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS). The USPTO is

also directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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